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Food and Nutrition

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CHANGES IN FOOD STAMP PROGRAM OPERATION

COUPON ALLOTMENTS TO INCREASE

FOOD STAMP COUPON allotments will increase on July 1 for all participants in the food stamp program in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. Separate allotments and eligibility standards for Alaska and Hawaii will be implemented when costs of the economy food plan in those States are available. The Food Stamp Act requires that the value of the coupon allotment be adjusted annually to reflect changes in the prices of food published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

This action also increases maximum income eligibility standards and changes purchase requirements for some households.

The cost of increased benefits will be approximately \$140 million. Total food stamp benefits for fiscal year 1974 are estimated at \$2.1 billion.

The allotment increases are based on the change in the cost of the USDA economy food plan between December 1971 and December 1972. Similar year-to-year changes were announced in April 1972 and 1971. The changes are an-

nounced at this time to provide States with time to implement them by the effective date of July 1.

The value of the coupon allotment for a family of four will increase from \$112 to \$116. The maximum income standard for the four-person household will increase from \$373 to \$387.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE WITHHOLDING MADE OPTIONAL

AN AMENDMENT TO food stamp program regulations was announced by USDA on March 26. It does the following:

- Makes the withholding of food stamp purchase requirements from public assistance checks a voluntary option of the State. Twenty-four States are now offering public assistance withholding.
- Deletes the provision that no person on public assistance can be charged with violations based on information in his certification affidavit.

This amendment is necessary to conform with the provisions of the Social Security Amendments of 1972 (Public Law 92-603), which revoked the mandatory

provisions of the Food Stamp Act requiring State agencies to offer recipients the public assistance withholding option.

Since the provisions of Public Law 92-603 are mandatory and have been in effect since January 1, 1973, the new amendment will be effective immediately.

SCHOOL LUNCH PARTICIPATION TRIPLES OVERNIGHT IN TEST

IN ONE OF THE five schools being used for test situations in the Study on High School Participation, average daily participation tripled overnight as a result of "merchandising" the Type A lunch and promoting it with the students.

Kirkwood High School in Kirkwood, Missouri, had been serving approximately 55 Type A lunches per day. This number rose to 185 when the kids learned that they could save as much as 35 cents on some meals by choosing one of the 40-cent "specials" rather than buying the same items a la carte.

Continued promotion is being carried out with Student Council Officers touring facilities and the school newspaper featuring the lunch program in articles designed to dispel negative and erroneous information.

These negative attitudes about the program are melting away. Correct, positive information is maintaining the increased participation and building a good foundation for the school lunch program next year.

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORTS TO PRESIDENT

THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL on Child Nutrition submitted its second annual report to President Nixon and the Congress on March 27.

It recommended:

- Actions designed to increase the level of student participation in already participating schools, particularly high schools.
- Using school facilities and experience for summer feeding programs.
- Making sure the use of new food products is properly monitored and accompanied by appropriate nutrition education materials.

The 13-member Council, appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, includes nine members from specified fields of experience related to child nutrition and four USDA representatives.

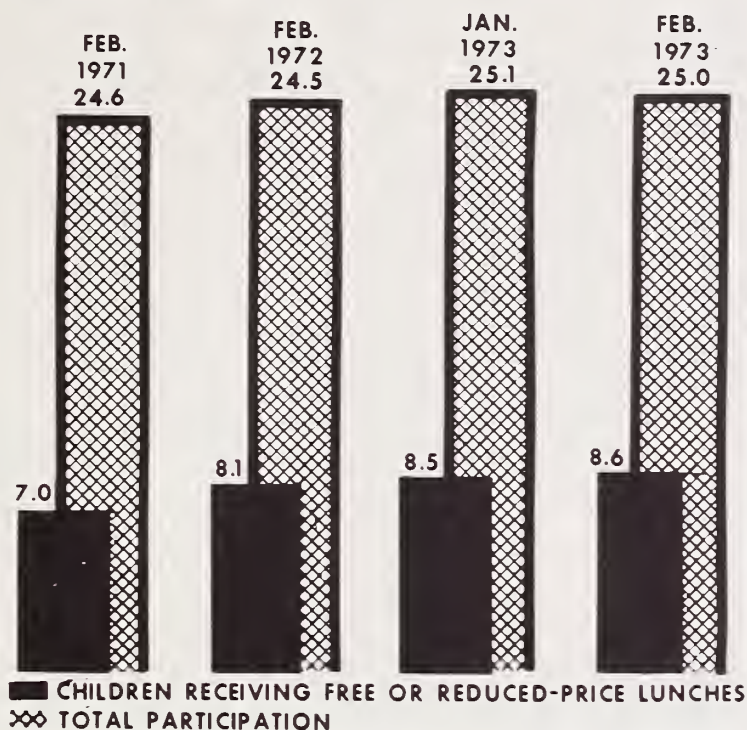
In its first annual report, issued last March, the Council identified five areas of priority concern: nutrition education, reaching schools without programs, upgrading school food service personnel, revising nutritional standards for child nutrition programs, and implementing advance funding authority.

During its second year of operation, the Council studied the actions taken by USDA and other Federal and State agencies in these areas of concern, and recommended continued follow-up by means of:

- Federal emphasis on training the trainers of teachers and other school personnel in nutritional science, nutrition education, and food service management.
- Informing school administrators and policy makers of the importance of school food service and nutrition education by reaching them through their professional publications and communications media.
- Utilization of qualified school

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

(Millions of Participants)



food service personnel and other qualified school personnel in fields related to health and nutrition as a resource for both nutrition education and career development education.

- Obtaining more Federal funds to assist State educational agencies in carrying out nutrition education and training efforts and to provide appropriate nutrition education materials.

New Booklet Explains "What's Happened to Food Prices"

SECRETARY EARL L. BUTZ discussed both food programs and food prices when he spoke at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday, April 3.

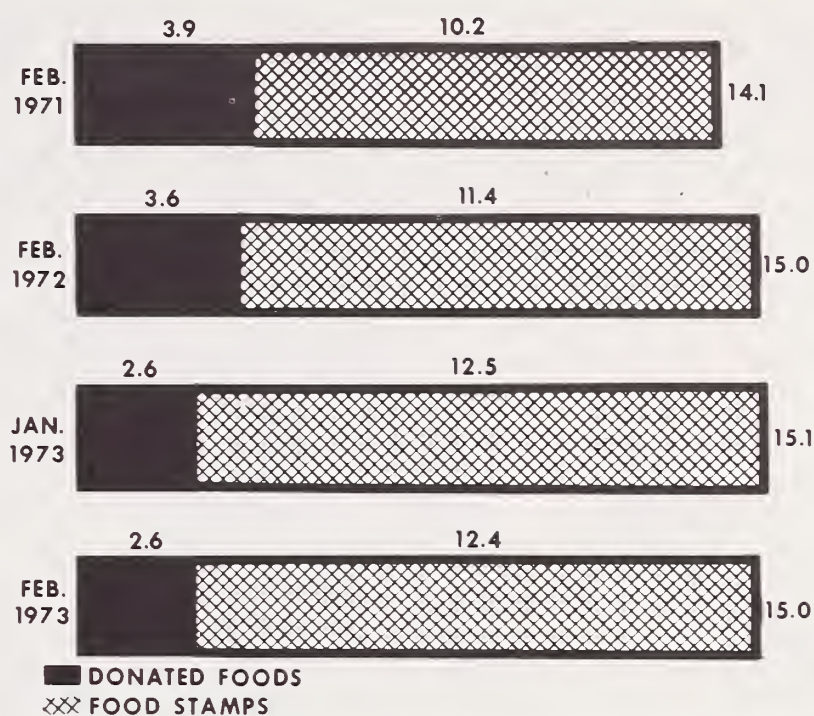
He spoke on "Food, Farm Programs, and the Future." He also announced publication of a booklet beneficial to all consumers concerned with rising food costs.

Entitled, "What's Happened to Food Prices?" the pamphlet explains:

- How and why food prices have gone up.

FAMILY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

(Millions of Participants)



- What USDA is doing about food prices.
- That food prices have gone up much less than health care, shelter, and wages.
- That we are eating more beef and more of the best-quality beef.
- That our beef prices are lower than in other countries.
- How much farmers get of the money spent on farm-produced food.

To obtain a copy of this new pamphlet, write to the Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Nutrition Education Projects Approved in Six States

GRANTS TO SIX State educational agencies for pilot projects in nutrition education were announced on March 12 by USDA.

This pilot program will explore approaches to nutrition education, to be

developed and implemented under the supervision of State nutrition education specialists. To help children understand sound dietary patterns and eating habits, the specialists will design and test model programs of nutrition education using existing educational resources and local food delivery systems.

Grants were made by FNS with funds authorized by the Child Nutrition Act for nutrition education and training to increase effectiveness of the child nutrition programs in reaching the school aged child with improved nutrition.

The funds were awarded to States to hire a specialist in nutrition education to develop the projects which were submitted in proposal form to FNS. States were selected representing a variety of approaches and a geographical distribution of the FNS regions.

States which received the awards were: Alabama--\$31,280; Arkansas--\$35,542; California--\$38,988; Nebraska--\$17,289; New York--\$38,387; and Pennsylvania--\$36,991. The grants have been made for one year.

Public Comment Invited on Food Alternates

ON APRIL 10, USDA announced proposed amendments to its regulations providing for greater public participation in considering the use of food alternates in child nutrition programs.

One proposed amendment provides that notice of all changes in meal pattern requirements will be published and that the public will be invited to comment on all such proposals.

This replaces a July 21st proposal which provided for administrative approval of foods as alternates for one or more components of the four food groups specified in the meal require-

ments for child nutrition programs.

In line with this change in procedure, USDA has also proposed amendments to approve the use of the following foods in specified child nutrition programs:

- Enriched macaroni with fortified protein.
- Textured vegetable protein products.
- Formulated grain-fruit products.

Comments, suggestions, or objections on the proposed regulations are invited; they should be sent to Herbert D. Rorex, Director, Child Nutrition Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, by May 14. Be sure to identify the regulation, section, and paragraph.

COMMODITY SHORTFALL PAYMENTS

ON APRIL 6, USDA announced plans to make a one-time distribution of cash payments to States because current estimates indicate that deliveries of commodities for school food service use will fall short of amounts programmed for the current fiscal year.

President Nixon gave his approval to Public Law 93-13, providing for these payments. Under this legislation, a total of \$70,809,000 will be paid by April 15 to State educational agencies for use in school lunch and breakfast programs.

USDA foods available for distribution to these programs have been limited this year by marketing conditions. To compensate for this shortfall, FNS plans to pay the States the difference between the value of foods programmed for delivery by June 30 and the value of the foods currently expected to be delivered by that date.